

Al Farouq

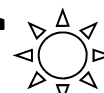
The Criterion

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The Reality of



TASOWWUF

The following article is an introduction to the subject by Hazrat Moulana Maseehullah sahib (RA), who was undoubtedly an Imam and Reformer in this field during this era.

This excerpt is from his book *Shariah and Tasowwuf* which is indeed a masterpiece on Tasowwuf, and a must read for every individual intending to trod the Divine Path of Sulook.

DEFINITION

The department of the Shariah relating to a'maale batini (states or qualities of the heart) is called Tasawwuf and Suluk, and the department of the Shariah relating to a'maale zaahiri (external physical acts) is called Fiqh. The subject matter dealt with

by Tasowwuf is *tahzheebe akhlaq* or the refinement of one's character, while the motive of this branch of the Shariah is the attainment of Divine Pleasure. The method of acquisition of this Divine Pleasure is **total obedience to the commands of the Shariah**.

Tasawwuf in fact is the Rooh (soul) and state of perfection of the Deen. Its function is to purify the baatin (i.e. the spiritual self) of man from the lowly bestial attributes of lust, evils of the tongue,

anger, malice, jealousy, love of the world, love for fame, niggardliness, greed, ostentation, vanity, deception, etc. At the same time it (Tasowwuf) aims at the adornment of the heart with the lofty attributes of repentance, perseverance, gratefulness, fear of Allah, hope, abstention, tauheed, trust, love, sincerity, truth, meditation, reckoning, contemplation, etc. In this way, attention towards Allah Ta'ala is inculcated in man. This is in fact the purpose of life. Tasowwuf or Tareeqat is therefore not at all contradictory to Deen and Shariah. On the contrary, it is incumbent for every Muslim to become a Sāfi (one who follows the path of Tasowwuf). Minus Tasowwuf, a Muslim cannot truly be described as a perfect Muslim.

THE NEED FOR Refinement of Akhlaaq

Akhlaaq means character. It is plural of khulq, which means a trait or attribute. This word is mentioned in the hadith. Rasoolullah said: "The most perfect of Believers is one who has the best akhlaaq (character)" In another hadith the Messenger of Allah ﷺ expresses the purpose and object of his mission in the following words: "I have been sent to perfect good akhlaaq."

Akhlaaq is the empirical object of tasowwuf, for this science is all

about good character and bad behaviour. It has always been observed, and more so today than ever before, that good character breeds unity, whilst bad character is the cause of much misery and grief. Noble akhlaaq forms the basis of a good marriage, and is a means of winning over the hearts of people. In another hadith Rasoolullah ﷺ said: "The weightiest thing to be placed on the scales of a Believer on the Day of Judgment

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THE NEED FOR TASOWWUF

Now that it is clear that Tasowwuf is not contrary to the Deen, but is in fact a branch of the Shariah, its need

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Hanafi Questions & Answers

Q: Do we the Ahlus-Sunnah believe in Abdaals, Qutub, and Ghowth, or are these titles just fairy tales?

A: The titles Abdaal, Qutub, Ghowth, etc are genuine titles for different categories of Auliya (Saints) which appear in authentic hadith. When Sayyiduna Ali ؑ was in Iraq then one day someone asked him to curse the people of Syria. Hazrat Ali ؑ refused to do so, and remarked: "I heard Rasoolullah ﷺ say: 'The Abdaal are in Asia minor (Shaam or Syria are its environs). They are forty in number. Every time one of them dies, Allah sends another in his place. Through them people receive rain, and through them victory is granted over enemies. They are also the cause of punishment being warded off from the people of Shaam.'" (Narrated by Imam Ahmad, and declared Saheeh by Allama Suyooti). Many Scholars of Hadith have mentioned different versions of this hadith but with the same meaning. Some hadith mention words such as *Autaad*, *Nujabaa*, and *Nuqabaa* for different levels of Saints.

Q: Is it necessary to make zhikr under the guidance of a Shaikh?

A: This is not necessary but preferable, for in most cases a qualified and experienced Shaikh will prescribe thikr that is beneficial for the Mureed's spiritual progress.

Q: Are the terms 'tasowwuf' and 'mureed' etc. not Bid'ah, because they are not mentioned in the hadith of Rasoolullah ﷺ? I have heard some Arabs say this.

A: These are technical terms devised by the masters in this subject. Every science of Islam has its own technical terms, which have absolutely no origin in Quran or Sunnah, but have been used by Ulema throughout the centuries without any objection whatsoever. In hadith we have terms such as *Saheeh*, *Hasan*, *Dha'eef*, *Mu'dhal*, *Mursal*, *Musnad*, *Muttasil*, *Munqati'*

etc. These terms are not found even in the times of the Sahaaba, but were instead created by the masters in the Science of Hadith. No one terms these words as a 'bid'ah'. There are numerous similar examples in the other branches of Islamic learning, like *Fiqah*, *Tafseer*, *Nahu*, *Sarf*, *Balaaghah*, etc. These technical phrases have become accepted as part of Islam.

Q: I am addicted to masturbation. I cannot help myself and I am only 13 years old.

A: You should seek counsel with a learned (Aalim), pious person in your area, who can assist and advise you. This is a devastating sickness that takes long to cure. Ponder over the physical harms of this sinful act, as well as the spiritual harms. One who excessively commits this act, will lose his manhood (ability to have sex with a woman) at an early age and will thus not be physically fit for marriage in later life. Masturbation causes the eyes and memory to become weak; it disrupts the body's digestive system thus always causing build up of winds.

Imam Ataa' (rahmatullahi alayh) was asked regarding this. He replied: "*A group of people will be resurrected on Qiyamat while their hands will be pregnant. They are those who had been doing this act and did not repent (before death). Their fault will be witnessed by everyone on Qiyamat Day.*"

Hazrat Sa'eed bin Jubayr (rahmatullahi alayh) says that Allah will punish those people who fiddle with their private parts.

Refrain from reading literature and books that describe sexual acts or that contain pictures of naked and semi naked women. Avoid all forms of pornographic material, as well as websites that show these filth. Read Deeni books to build up within you the love and fear of Allah. Sit alone a few minutes every day thinking about the Power and

Punishment of Allah. Spend a lot of time in the company of an elderly Aalim or pious person. Ponder regularly over these points and seek advice from a learned person you trust. Make thikr of these words as much as possible:

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

Trans: *There is no power to do good, nor strength to abstain from evil, but with Allah.*

May Allah Ta'ala assist you in your fight against this evil, aameen.

Q: I have this bad quality of jealousy for some of my classmates who are more intelligent than me. I make Dua that Allah removes this quality. What else can I do, because it's destroying me and preventing me gaining knowledge?

A: Firstly, congratulations on your concern for spiritual well-being. Indeed jealousy, according to hadith, destroys good deeds like fire devours (dry) twigs. But let's make sure whether the feeling you experienced is indeed jealousy. If your heart burns with annoyance at the achievements of your classmates, and you wish they must not achieve what they have, or that something bad should happen to them, then this is definitely a sign of real jealousy. You need to treat this malady urgently. If you do not experience the above; you do not wish bad for your classmates, nor do you burn inside you over their feats; instead you wish to achieve the same as them, then this is not jealousy but envy and is not haraam in Shariah. As for

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Hanafi Q&A

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the cure to jealousy, do the following: a) Make regular dua for the people you are jealous of; ask Allah to increase their skills and achievements; b) Sometimes give them gifts, if possible; c) Contemplate that whatever they have achieved, is only through the Grace of Allah, and He has the Right to confer His Grace upon whomsoever He wishes. These few activities are guaranteed to cure the evil trait of jealousy, insha Allah.

Q: Is it compulsory to take Bay'ah at the hands of a Shaikh?

A: Bay'ah is not compulsory, but sunnah.

Q: Is it faradh to go to a Shaikh for self-reformation? Why can't one do this on his or her own?

A: If it was possible for a human to achieve spiritual reformation and rectitude on his or her own then there would be no need for Allah to send His Messenger ﷺ to this world. One of the main functions of Rasoolullah ﷺ was to provide tazkiyah or spiritual reformation. Almighty Allah states in the Holy Quran: *"It is He who has sent among the unlettered people a Rasool from among them; he (the Rasool) recites to them the Verses of Allah, and he purifies them spiritually..."* (Surah Jumu'ah, verse 2) The As-haab ؓ acquired spiritual rectitude and rehabilitation directly from Allah's Messenger ﷺ, and they in turn reformed other members of the Ummat, and ever since this chain of reformations has continued unabatedly. The Holy Quran commands: *'O Believers: fear Allah and associate with the Truthful Ones'* (Surah Taubah) By always associating with pious people, one finds it easy to achieve reformation. Treading the Path of Sulook is like undertaking a journey towards an unknown place. Without a guide this is almost impossible.



Shaafi Questions & Answers

Q: If a female is in the state of haidh or nifaas, can she read Quran without touching it?

A: It is haraam for a woman in haidh or nifaas to recite the Holy Quran from memory, even if she does not touch or hold the Quran. (Al-Majmoo')

Q: If a Muslim died and was given ghusl by a non-Muslim relative or non-Muslim funeral parlour, is that ghusl valid?

A: Ghusl of a dead person is valid when clean water is poured over the whole body in such a way that the entire body is wetted. If this happens, the ghusl is valid, even if this was done by non-Muslims. However, if Muslims deliberately allow non-Muslims to bathe their dead, then they all will be sinful. (Raudhatut-Taalibeen)

Q: Can a wife give ghusl to her dead husband, and vice versa?

A: Yes, it is permissible for one spouse to give ghusl to the other. (Raudhatut-Taalibeen)

Q: Is it permissible for a couple to indulge in sexual intercourse if the wife is experiencing her menses?

A: To do this is absolutely haraam, for it has been strictly prohibited in the hadith. Furthermore, if the husband does this, it is compulsory for him to repent, and advisable that he gives any amount of money in sadqah. (Note: This law applies to all math-habs.)

Q: Some Ulema have branded Rainbow chickens as haraam, while others certify it as halaal. In view of this, are we allowed to eat it?

A: As a rule, whenever a controversy arises over meat and poultry products, it is best to abstain until clarity is reached. Here, too, we advise the same.

The acceptance of one's duas and ibaadat is dependent on the consumption of halaal, hence one should exercise caution in such matters. Furthermore, we advise people to follow the Ulema who they are affiliated to and in whom they have confidence.

Q: A woman is a Shafi and her husband as Hanafi. Shafis leave Muzdalifah after Maghrib and Hanafis after Fajr. The Shafi wife doesn't have a Mahram to accompany her. What must she do?

A: A Shafi cannot leave Muzdalifah after Maghrib. Wuqoof at Muzdalifah begins in the second part of the night. The Shafi has to spend at least a short while at Muzdalifah during the second part of the night, and thereafter may depart. If the Shafi left before the second part of the night commenced, he has to return to fulfill the Wuqoof. If he did not do so before Fajr commenced, 'Dumm' will be compulsory. The Shafi wife must remain with her husband and leave Muzdalifah with him after Fajr. (Kitaabul Hajj, Sheikh Muhammad al Khateeb al Sharbeeni)

Q: Can a Shafi woman cover her feet during Ihraam?

A: A Shafi woman is allowed to cover her feet (by wearing socks) in the state of Ihraam. (Haashiyatul Bujairami alal Khateeb, 7:170)

Q: Can a female get her eyebrows trimmed? Can a Muslim female (beautician) trim the eyebrows of her lady clients? Is the ruling the same in the Hanafi and Shafi Math-habs?

A: A lady should not trim her eyebrows or have it trimmed by someone else, nor should she trim the eyebrows of others. The Hadith has forbidden these acts. The ruling is the same in both the Math-habs. (Ounul Ma'bood, 9:208, al Bahrur Raaiq, 16:78, I'aanatut Taalibeen, 4:53) ❀

TECHNICAL TERMS OF SHARIAT AND TAREEQAT

The fountain of all Islamic teaching is the Quran and the Sunnat. The inception of this teaching was in the *Majlis* (gathering) of Nabi Muhammad ﷺ. This was the initial stage of Islam that prevailed in its headquarters (in Madinah) — Hazrat Moulana Maseehullah sahib (RA)

At that stage Islam had a confined number of adherents, hence all branches of Islamic instruction – Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqah and Tasowwuf – were imparted at one venue, the Madresa of Rasoolullah ﷺ. Separate departments did not exist. However, in this Madresa of Rasoolullah ﷺ there was a permanent group of lovers of Allah and devotees of Rasoolullah ﷺ who were at all times engaged in the purification of the nafs, and the reformation of the baatin by means of practical education. This group was called *Ashaabe Suffah*.

Later when Islam acquired an universal status, the Ulema of Deen formulated the teachings of Islam into separate departments. Those who rendered service to the knowledge of Hadith are called *Muhadditheen*; those who undertook the responsibility of Tafseer are called *Mufasssireen*; those who specialized in Fiqah are called *Fuqahaa*, while those who took custody of the department of *Islaah Baatin* (purification of the nafs) became known as the *Mashaaikh-e-Sāfiyya*. Hence, not a single one among the great authorities of former times ever divorced Shariat from Tareeqat. On the contrary, they also held Tareeqat in subservience to the Shariat.

SHARIAT, TAREEQAT, HAQEEQAT & MA'RIFAT

The whole combination of the teachings imposed by Islam is known as the Shariat. Both sets of acts, viz., A'maale Zaahiri and A'maale Baatini, are included. In the terminology of the Mutaqaddimeen (the

early authorities of the Shariat) the term Fiqh was synonymous with the word Shariat. Thus Imam Abu Hanifah (*rahmatullahi alaihi*) defined Fiqh as follows:

"The recognition of that which is beneficial and harmful to the nafs."

Later, in the terminology of the Muta-akhireen (the later authorities of the Shariat) the word Fiqh was used for that branch of Islam which related to external ibaadat-while the branch which dealt with internal qualities became known as Tasowwuf. The ways or methods of acquiring the internal qualities and conditions are called Tareeqat.

The reformation of the internal self brings about spiritual lustre and glitter of the heart to which is revealed, in consequence, certain realities (haqaaq) pertaining to tangible and intangible occurrences especially virtue and vice; as well as certain realities pertaining to Divine Attributes and Acts especially related to affairs between Allah and His servants. These revelations are known as Haqeeqat. The process of these revelations is called Ma'rifat while the Saint of Ma'rifat is known as a *Muhaqqiq* and *Aarif*.

All the aforementioned relates to the Shariat. The notion that the Shariat and Tareeqat are entities apart - this notion has gained prominence in the public - is totally false and baseless. Now that the nature and reality of Tasowwuf and Suluk have become clear, it will be understood that:

★ *Kashf* (inspiration and revelation) and *karamat* (miracles) are not necessary.

★ It does not promise success in the worldly affairs.

★ It does not assert that one's work will be achieved by means of ta'weez and potions; nor does it claim that one will be successful in court cases by means of duaa.

★ It does not promise increase in one's earnings nor does it promise cure from physical ailments.

★ It does not foretell future events.

★ It does not contend that the disciple's (mureed) reformation will be achieved by the spiritual focussing of the Shaikh. Extra-normal operation is not necessary to Tasowwuf.

★ It does not contend that the one who trods this Path will not be afflicted by even the thought of sin nor does it claim that the mureed will automatically (without effort) engage in Ibadat.

★ It does not promise total self-annihilation so that one is not aware even of one's own existence.

★ It does not promise the experiencing of states of ecstasy and spiritual effulgence in Thikr and Shaghl (spiritual exercise) nor does it claim that one will see beautiful dreams and wonderful visions.



All these are not the aims of Tasowwuf. The purpose is the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This then, should be kept in sight. ❀

[Extracted from the book *Shariat and Tasowwuf* by Hazrat Maseehul-Ummat RA.]

BAY'AH

Bay'ah (also pronounced bay'at) is a mutual pledge relating to the striving, arranging, executing and adhering to the laws of A'maale Zaahiri and A'maale Baatini. This pledge is called Bay'at-e-Tareeqat which has been in vogue by authoritative transmission from generation to generation since the earliest time of Islam. Rasūlullah ﷺ had enacted Bay'at of the Sahabah not only on Jihad, but on Islam and the adherence of the Ahkam (Laws in general) as well on practical deeds (A'maal). This is established by numerous Ahadith. The following is one such Hadith:

"Auf bin Malik Ashja'ee (radhiyallahu anhu) said: We were with Nabi ﷺ, seven, eight or nine (of us), when he said: 'Will you not make a bay'ah (pledge) to the Rasool of Allah?' We stretched out our hands and enquired: On what shall we make bay'at to you, O Rasool of Allah? He said: 'That you make the Ibadat of Allah; that you associate nothing with Him; that you perform the five Salah; that you hear and obey.'"

(Muslim, Abu Dawood, Nisai)

On this occasion the Bay'at which Rasoolullah ﷺ took from the Sahabah was neither Bay'at Imani (Pledge of Iman) nor Bay'at Jihadi (Pledge of Jihad). This Hadith is categorical proof for the system of Bay'at practiced by the Mashaykh of Tasawwuf.

THE NATURE OF BAY'AT

The meaning of bay'at (ba ya 'a - to sell) is inherent in Bay'at. Bay'at thus implies that the mureed 'sells' himself to the Shaikh. In other words he has sold himself to the Shaikh in preparation of ahkam-e-zaahirah and ahkam-e-baatinah (i.e. to learn to give practical expression to the Law of Allah Ta'ala). The nature of this 'sale' envisages that the searcher after the truth (taalib)

should repose implicit trust and faith in his Shaikh. He should understand and accept that the advices and prescriptions, admonitions and prohibitions of the Shaikh are all designed and motivated for his (the mureed's) spiritual well-being. The taalib shall not interfere with or impede the diagnosis and prescriptions of the Shaikh. He should have implicit faith to such an extent that he should believe that in all the world there is none in his knowledge who can benefit him more than his Shaikh. In the terminology of Tasawwuf this conception of implicit faith in the Shaikh is known as *wahdat-e-matlab* (unity of purpose). Minus this conception, the ceremony of Bay'at is meaningless and of no benefit because congeniality (*munasabat*) with the Shaikh is an essential condition for *islah* (reformation) of the nafs.

The sign of the existence of congeniality (*munasabat*) between the Mureed and his Shaikh is that the heart of the Mureed does not object to the respect, statements and acts of the Shaikh. Should any objection arise in the heart regarding the Shaikh, the mureed should grieve and feel depressed.

The external form of Bay'at is beneficial to the general public since it induces reverence and respect in them for the Shaikh. As a result, they readily accept the Shaikh's statements and are constrained to act accordingly. However, for the elite (khawas), i.e. the Ulama, Bay'at proves beneficial after a period has been spent in association with the Shaikh. By virtue of Bay'at a bond of sincerity (*khulus*) is generated between the mureed and the Shaikh. The Shaikh considers the mureed to belong to him and the mureed

considers the Shaikh to belong to him. There does not remain any suspense between them.

THE FOUR SALAASIL (SPIRITUAL ORDERS)

Like there are four Math-habs (Schools of Thought) in Fiqh, viz. Hanafi, Shaafi, Maliki and Hambali, so too, are there four schools (Orders) in Tasawwuf, viz., Chishtiyya, Qadiriyyah, Naqshabandiyyah and Suharwardiyyah. Our *akaabir* (authorities in Tasawwuf) initiate the bay'at in all the four Spiritual Orders, so that respect for the four Salaasil is maintained although the Chishtiyyah Order is dominant (among our pious predecessors).

FOUNDERS OF THE FOUR ORDERS

- ❖ The founder of the **Chishtiyyah** Silsilah or Order is Hazrat Khwaja Mueenuddin Chishti Ajmeri (*rahmatullahi alaihi*) of Ajmer, India.
- ❖ The founder of the **Qadiriyyah** Order is Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (*rahmatullahi alaihi*) of Baghdad, Iraq.
- ❖ The founder of the **Naqshbandiyyah** Order is Hazrat Shaikh Bahauddin Naqshbandi (*rahmatullahi alaihi*) of Bukhara, Russia.
- ❖ The founder of the **Suharwardiyyah** Order is Hazrat Shaikh Shihabuddin Suharwardi of Northern Iran (*rahmatullahi alaihi*).

THE MODE OF BAY'AT

The Bay'at is enacted by the Shaikh taking into his right hand the right hand of the mureed (disciple). If the group contracting the Bay'at is large, the Shaikh uses a length of cloth onto which each member of the group holds with his right hand. Ladies who contract the Bay'at do so from behind a screen. A mahram of the lady should also be present at the Bay'at ceremony. Hazrat Ayesha *radhiyallahu anha* said: "*Rasoolullah ﷺ never touched the palm of a woman, but*

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The Need for a Shaikh

It has always been in the Divine Scheme of things that perfection cannot be attained without an *ustad* (expert instructor). Thus when one is endowed with the guidance to enter into the Road of *Tareeqat*, one should search for an *Ustad* of *Tareeqat* so that one may reach the true goal through the medium of his graceful instruction and auspicious companionship.

"O my heart! If you desire to undertake this sojourn, hold on to the garment of the guide. Whoever trod the Path of Love without Companion his life passed by without attaining love."

Hazrat Hakimul Ummat *rahmatullahi alaihi* therefore says:

"What! Has anyone attained perfection by only books? It is simple to understand that one cannot become a carpenter without sitting in the company of a carpenter; one cannot become a tailor without the companionship of a tailor; one cannot become a calligraphist without the company of a calligrapher. In short, one cannot attain

perfection or become an expert without the companionship of an expert."

The companionship of a pious man will induce piety in you. Similarly, the companionship of an evil man will induce evil in you. He who searches for association with Allah Ta'ala, has to acquire the association of the Auliya-e-Kiram. A short while spent in the companionship of Auliya is nobler and superior to a century of unostentatious obedience. Companionship with the pious for even a moment is superior to a century of zuhd (abstention) and ta'at (obedience).

THE SIGN OF SHAIKH-E-KAMIL (QUALIFIED SHAIKH)

A shaikh is one who has full knowledge and experience of spiritual ailments (*amrādh-e-bātinah*), attributes of vice and virtue (*akhlāq-e-razeelah* and *akhlāq-e-hameedah*), their characteristics (*khawās*) and their effects

(*ta'theerat*). He should further be able to distinguish between their similarities and he must have perfect ability in devising plans and prescriptions for the acquisition of the attributes of virtue and the elimination of the attributes of vice. He has to be aware of the progress and retrogress of these attributes. He must be well versed in the hazards of the nafs and shaitaan, the intuitive senses and feeling pertaining to the angels and the Divine Being. He must be able to distinguish these various intuitive and extra-sensory feelings and perceptions. It is therefore imperative that the Shaikh of *tareeqat* be one who is qualified in this knowledge, be a *mujtahid* in this field and possesses natural ability and inherent propensity. If he has acquired the *tareeq* by a mere self-study of books on *Tasawwuf* or by listening from others, he will destroy the *mureed* whom he is attending, because he will not be in position to correctly diagnose the various states of the *mureed*.

Shaikh Ibn Arabi (*rahmatullahi alaihi*) briefly summarizes the signs of a Shaikh-e-Kamil (the perfect and qualified Shaikh) to be

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he would take the (pledge-bay'at) from her (verbally). Upon having made the bay'at he would say: 'Go! Verily, I have already made bay'at with you.'" (*Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawood*)

It is for this reason that in entering ladies into the *bay'at*, the Masha-

ikh do so verbally or by means of a cloth which is spread from the Shaikh to the lady behind the screen.

This is the method of *bay'at* when in the presence of the Shaikh. Those who are not able to present themselves personally to the Shaikh could contract the *Bay'at*

by means of a letter or through the agency of a responsible and trustworthy person. This form of *Bay'at* is called *bay'at-e-Uthmani*. Rasoolullah ﷺ on the occasion of *bay'at-e-Ridhwan* made the *Bay'at* of Hazrat Uthman in his (Uthman's) absence. On this occasion, Rasoolullah ﷺ placed his right hand on his left hand and announced that he has made *Bay'at* of Uthman. (The *bay't* in absence of the *mureed* is therefore termed *bay'at-e-Uthmani*.) ❀

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The Need for a Shaikh

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three:

1. Deen resembling the Deen of the Ambiya.
2. Prescribing like the physicians.
3. Management and control like that of kings.

The exposition of the aforementioned summary is as follows:

1. He should possess the necessary knowledge of the Deen which he must have acquired by either academic pursuit of such knowledge or from companionship with the Ulama-e-Muhaqqiqeen.
2. He must be a deputy (Khalifah) of a Shaikh-e-Kamil attached to an authentic Silsilah. (SPIRITUAL ORDER)
3. He should be uprighteous and pious.
4. He derived spiritual benefit by remaining for an adequate period of time in the company of the Shaikh. Such "companionship" is either by means of correspondence or by physical presence in the association of the Shaikh.
5. The people of knowledge (i.e. the Ulama) hold him in high esteem, and refer to him.
6. The effect of his companionship (suhbat) is increase in the desire for Akhirat and Divine love as well as detestation for the love of the world.
7. The majority of his mureeds are followers of the Shariat, their

conditions conforming with the demands of the Shariat.

8. He is devoid of greed and desire (for worldly gain and benefit).
9. He engages in Thikr and devotional practices.
10. He does not leave his mureeds unfettered, but reprimands them when the need arises. He treats everyone according to their respective abilities.

The one in whom these attributes exist is worthy of being a Shaikh and he should be considered a wonderful alchemy. His companionship and service to him are in fact priceless treasures. Once these attributes of perfection are found in a Shaikh, one should not be concerned about *karamat* (miracles) and *kashf* (inspiration). It is not necessary that these states exist in the Shaikh-e-Kamil nor is it necessary that he be one who does not himself earn his livelihood.

THE BENEFITS OF THE COMPANIONSHIP OF A SHAIKH-E-KAMIL

The benefits of association with a Shaikh-e-Kamil are manifold. Among such benefits are:

1. The noble and lofty qualities of the Shaikh slowly develop in the mureed.
2. Even if one is not totally reformed, one will have gained

the ability to discern and recognize one's faults.

3. The mureed follows the Shaikh in character and habit.
4. Attainment of joy and pleasure in Thikr and ibadat.
5. Enhancement of courage.
6. The obtainal of clarification and contentment from the Shaikh in the event of a spiritual condition settling over the mureed.
7. The mureed will discern his own spiritual condition which becomes manifest in the talks of the Shaikh, such talks being the essence of the masa-il (rules).
8. Increase in the desire to practise virtue.
9. The mureed's ability becomes manifest to him.
10. Love for Allah Ta'ala increases.
11. Quick attainment of cure for spiritual ailments.
12. Obtaining the dua of the Shaikh.
13. Elimination of doubt and uncertainty as a result of the Nur emanating from the heart of the Shaikh. This Nur has its effect on the mureed. Spiritual darkness is dispelled by this Nur. The reality of all things thus becomes manifest. There are degrees regarding the efficacy of this Nur depending on the degree of fertility of the disposition of the mureed. One of high and noble disposition can attain the full beneficial effect of this Nur by merely looking at such Shaikhs of perfection. In such cases the mureed attains spiritual progress and ranks without even physical association with the Shaikh. ❀

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MODERN DAY SUFISM

As explained elsewhere in this publication, tasowwuf developed into a recognised and fully fledged Islamic science that was expounded and taught by high-ranking Ulema and Auliya of the past. All the practices and concepts of these Ulema were in total conformity to Shariah. The main thrust of this orthodox tasowwuf was adherence to the Sunnah of Our Beloved Rasool ﷺ and reformation of the lowly self, thus bringing the mureed closer to Almighty Allah. There was nothing beyond this in the former mode of tasowwuf developed by the great Imams and Ulema of Deen. However, over recent years the off-shoots of the four salaasil (spiritual orders) that spread to different countries began introducing new methods, practices, and beliefs into tasowwuf, which then placed their brand of the science in almost diametric opposition to the original and pristine tasowwuf as taught and advocated by former Soofiyya. Adherence to Sunnah was no longer the hallmark of these newly formed Sufi groups, beliefs underwent mild to drastic changes, and practices adopted for thikr and worship were also at odds with Shariah.

The names of the original four Spiritual Orders or *Salaasil* were mentioned earlier (see pg 5). Over a passage of time various other Spiritual Orders sprang from these four in different parts of the globe, and each one adopted its own mode of tasowwuf, which differed to the original silsilah. Some of these differences are so marked and drastic that there remained little or no resemblance with the original silsilah from which it stemmed. Even the term ‘sufism’ has taken on a new connotation in modern day terminology. Today Sufism has become associated with the occult, supernatural, and mysti-

cal phenomenon. The very term ‘mysticism’ that has also evolved as a euphemistic alternate for modern-day Sufism, stems from the projected image of this distorted version of tasowwuf as a secretive and mysterious movement that is cloaked in a veil of enigma and cabalism. The reality is completely the opposite, as defined elsewhere in this edition of Al-Farouq.

We now list a few of the beliefs and practices that are found in today’s brand of Sufism and that has developed into an issue of serious contention.

► Making thikr to the accompaniment of a duff or drum. This was never the practice of former Soofiyya and, above all, is in conflict with Shariah. The drum is a musical instrument, which Rasoolullah ﷺ came to destroy. In one hadith The Messenger of Allah states: “Verily Allah has sent me as a Mercy and Guide to the Universe. And My Rabb has commanded me with the destruction of musical instruments...” (Musnad of Imam Ahmed). It is impossible for anyone to come closer to Allah through means that displeases Him.

► Dancing and jumping around when making thikr. The same as above can be said about the practice found in the *hadhrah* of modern day Sufi circles. Dancing is totally haraam, and perpetrating this act whilst taking Allah’s name and reciting salaawat on His Rasool ﷺ is the height of sacrilege. The so-called whirling dervishes of Turkey were the main culprits in giving prominence to this haraam practice. In fact, today in Turkey groups of these dervishes, dressed in high fezzes (koofiyahs) and long flowing robes

that sweep the floor, conduct entertainment shows where they chant thikr of Allah to the tune of musical instruments including the tambourine and the drum. The audience will then applaud them with loud shouts of delight and generous rounds of handclapping. These are the people who have mutilated true tasowwuf and in the process have made a total mock of Islam. These thikr shows are attended by non-Muslims as well, and Allah alone knows what impression they take home from these ‘thikr concerts’. These acts can never be attributed to Islam in any way, no matter what remote ‘proof’ people contrive to furnish in its support.

► Intermingling of men and women: Numerous verses of the Holy Quran and Ahadeeth of Our Rasool ﷺ condemn the mixing of sexes. This, too, was never allowed let alone practiced by orthodox Soofiyya-e-Kiraam. Females sit in the same room as men when making thikr.

► Interaction of females with the Shaikh of the Tareeqat: It has been reliably reported that many of these modern day Sufi orders allow females to hold the Shaikh’s hand at the time of Bay’at, or sit in his company at a function. The perception to justify such female interaction is that the Shaikh is beyond desire, so women are allowed freedom to touch him and be touched by him. Compare this to the statement of our Mother Hazrat Ayesha (radhiyallahu anhaa), that “the hand of Rasoolullah ﷺ never touched the hand of a woman at the time of bay’ah.” (Narrated by Imam Bukhari RA) If anyone was really above lowly desires and passions, it is the Messenger of Allah, yet he exercised pardah and segre-

(Continued on page 9)

MODERN DAY SUFISM

(Continued from page 8)

gation of sexes, so who dare make such an absurd claim (of being free from desire) in today's times of fitnah and moral degradation? In the words of Hazrat Moulana Thanwi (Rahmatullahi alayh), these so-called Shaikhs (who mingle with females and hold their hands) are 'wolves in the guise of sheep', and 'such people have brought the very delicate subject of tasowwuf into great disrepute'.

► Conducting 'plays' by young girls and boys on the life of Rasoolullah ﷺ and his Sahaabah in the presence of male and female audiences. People applaud all gestures with hand-clapping. How can one achieve islaah or tazkiyah of the nafs by indulging in blasphemous mockery of Islam?

► Photography and video filming: It has become acceptable among modern Sufi sects to take photographs of the Shaikh and film his activities including the musical thikr and dancing. The mureeds have big pictures of their Shaikh which they display proudly and with great respect in their homes. Regardless of what differences may exist on the permissibility of camera-generated photographs, the reverence of such pictures can never be permissible in a Religion that condemns all forms of shirk. This photo-reverence is a lesser form of Shirk. Some mureeds show

such respect to these photographs that they will not turn their backs towards it, and will make a slight gesture of respect when entering the room where the Shaikh's portrait is displayed.

► People who participated in the thikr and hadhrah programs of these Sufi sects have divulged that they were told to believe that the Holy Messenger of Allah ﷺ is actually present in their gatherings of salawaat and thikr. This is indeed a stark bid'ah that shakes the very foundations of our tauheed. Allah Forbid!

The above are but a few of the deviated practices found in modern-day Sufism. This distorted version of orthodox Sufism is found in America, Britain, Morocco, Egypt, and even here in South Africa. It is a hybrid concoction of outlandish and anti-Shariah practices that can never be condoned in Islam, let alone the highly spiritual field of Sufism. Every clear-minded Muslim will understand that such ways and methods are not part of Islam, and are in conflict with Quran and Sunnah. It is not possible for one indulging in these practices to become spiritually reformed. Any reformation or progress such mureeds perceive is merely a deception of the nafs and confusion (talbees) of Iblees.

Muslims must be on their guard not to fall prey to deviated sects who promote their own mangled and mutilated style of tasowwuf in the name of Islam. Anyone involved in these practices should dissociate themselves from such groups immediately and resort to taubah (repentance).

May Allah safeguard the Ummah from ways and methods that are contrary to the Sunnah. ❀

A MISSION STATEMENT OF WISDOM

By Hazrat Haji Muhammad Farouq Sahib (RA)

The hall-mark of our Silsilah (i.e. the Chishti Spiritual order) is **Kamaal-e-I'tidaal (perfect equilibrium)** in all departments of Deen. This is basically translated as total conformity to the Sunnat of Nabi Muhammad ﷺ in the manner conveyed to us by our pious predecessors. In our silsilah, there is no cult-worship nor personality adoration. We respect our Mashaa-ikh and Hold them in the highest esteem, but our actions are governed by the Love for Allah's Messenger and his Sahaaba (radhiyallahu anhum). ❀

THE NEED FOR Refinement of Akhlaaq

(Continued from page 1)

ment is good character, and Allah despises a rude and vulgar person." From this hadith it is established that vulgarity and obscenity are traits of evil character. One suffering from vulgarity and rudeness should seek the guidance of a

Shaikh to cure him or herself.

Good character is not only courtesy and meeting people with a smiling face; instead good akhlaaq is a condition of the heart that enables one to face up to any given situation with dignity, forbearance, tolerance, understand-

ing, wisdom, patience, respect, and self-control. The greater the character, the better equipped is one to deal with vagaries of life.

The method of rectifying morals and character is only one: Linking up to a qualified Shaikh who can diagnose spiritual sicknesses and prescribe cures. ❀

(Extracted from the writings and teachings of Hazrat Maseehul-Ummat)

TA'LEEM (INSTRUCTION) AT THE TIME OF BAY'AT

The following instructions and discipline have been issued to mureeds by Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Maseehullah sahib (RA)

Certain instructions are given to the mureed at the time of bay'at.

1. First is the qadha of Salah and Fasts that were missed. The qadha should be executed by performing along with each current Salah one Qadha Salah of the same time, e.g. along with the Ada Maghrib Salah a Qadha Maghrib Salah should be made, and so forth. During Isha salah. Qadhaa of the Witr should also be made. (Note: This applies to Hanafis only. Shaafis do not have to make qadhaa of missed Witr.—Editor) It is however preferable to perform a number of qadha aalah collectively at one time or in a single day, e.g. the Qadha Salah of several times or several days. In this way quicker discharge of the obligation takes place.

2. Discharge any monetary obligations of others if one is liable for such obligations. Such discharge is either by making the due payment or by obtaining the pardon of the one whose right is involved.

3. Fully guarding the eyes, ears and the tongue; total abstention from haraam and mushtabah (doubtful) wealth; appearance, dress to be in conformity with the Sunnah; total abstention from innovation and un-Islamic customs and practices on occasions of happiness and sorrow; to refrain from unlawful methods in all affairs; to constantly bear in mind not to harm anyone by means of one's hand or tongue; not to hurt anyone; refraining from association; meeting people only when necessary; and abstaining from unnecessary conversation.

4. Constantly maintaining the thikr of Kalimah Tayyibah, i.e. while walking, sitting, reclining and laying

down. The way to do this is to continuously engage in reciting.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

After reciting it a few times, add

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

5. After every Salat recite Ayatul Kursi followed by Tasbeeh Fatimi. i.e. 33 times *subhanallah*; 33 times *alhamdu lillah*; and thirty four times *Allahu Akbar*. If time affords then recite after Zuhr, Maghrib and Isha one Tasbeeh of the third Kalimah (i.e. 100 times).

6. After Isha Salah, at the time of going to bed engage in muhasabah (self-reckoning) and muraqabah-e-maut (contemplation of death).

MUHASABAH

Muhasabah means to take stock or reckoning. Here it means to take stock of one's own deeds and activities. One should reflect over the entire day's acts and deeds. Upon recalling a noble act or an act of Ibadat, express one's gratefulness (shukr) unto Allah Ta'ala and request for greater taufeeq (ability and inclination) to enhance virtue. Upon recalling one's evil or wrong doing, become regretful. This is the daily muhasabah incumbent upon the mureed.

MURAQABA-E-MAUT

This means to contemplate... to think about the oncoming event of maut (death). Reflect about the pangs of death, the questioning in the grave, the Plain of Resurrection, the Reckoning in Qiyamat; the presence in the Court of Allah;

crossing the Sirat, etc. All this has to be contemplated and a pledge is to be made that one will in future not venture near to sin. One tasbeeh of Istighfaar is then to be recited. The Istighfar is:

7. Consider yourself to be the most inferior, so much so, that if you observe with your own eyes another indulging in the worst of vices then too you shall not despise him/her, nor shall you consider yourself nobler than him/her. On the contrary one should fear and bear in mind that it is very possible that the perpetrator of the vice may resort to sincere taubah and become a person of high piety while the one who had despised the sinner become ensnared (Allah forbid!) in the meshes of the nafs and shaitan and be diverted from Ibadat and obedience. One has no certainty regarding one's end. One, therefore, has no basis for regarding another with contempt.

N.B. Instruction no. 7 above is the first step in Suluk. Without taking this step, the Path of Tasawwuf remains closed. ❀

FOOD for thought

HADITH:

BE IN THIS WORLD LIKE A WAYFARER OR ONE CROSSING A ROAD, and count yourself as one of the dead. (Bukhari)

Hazrat Umar ؓ said:

Take an account of your selves (in this world) before an account is demanded from you (in the hereafter). Weigh yourselves (here) before you are weighed (in the akhirah). (Kanzul-Ummal)

HADITH:

Increase the remembrance of that which severs all pleasures: i.e. death. ❀

The Reality of TASAWWUF

(Continued from page 1)

is evident. Hazrat Hakimul Ummat *rahmatullahi alaihi* states in the introduction of *Haqeeqatut Tareeqat*:

“After rectification of beliefs and external acts it is faradh (compulsory) upon every Muslim to rectify his esoteric or internal traits. Numerous Quranic ayaat and innumerable ahadith explicitly indicate the *fardhiyat* (compulsion) of this. However, most people of superficial understanding are neglectful of these because of their subservience to lowly desires. Who is not aware that the Quran and Ahadith are explicit regarding the significance of zuhd, qana’at, tawadhu’, ikhlas, sabr, shukr, hubbe ilahi, radha bil qadha, tawakkul, tasleem, etc., while at the same time they emphasise the acquisition of these noble attributes? What doubt is there in the fact that the noble qualities have been commanded and the bestial traits have been prohibited? This is the actual meaning of reforming the esoteric acts. This is the primary purpose of Tareeqat. It being faradh is undoubtedly an established fact.”

In *Tareequl Qalandar* he says:

“All the authentic principles of Tasawwuf are to be found in the Quran and Ahadith. The notion that Tasawwuf is not found in the Quran is erroneous.”

TASAWWUF & THE QURAN

Both external (zaahiri) and internal (baatini) acts and duties are commanded in the Quran. Thus the Quran while commanding Salaat and Zakaat: “O People of Iman! Establish Salaat and give Zakaat”, also commands shukr (gratefulness): “And be grateful unto Allah”.

At one place is to be found: “Fasting has been decreed upon you”, and: “Upon mankind is the

Hajj of the Bait for Allah.”.

While at another place is to be found: “He (Allah) loves them (Mu’mineen) and they love Him”, and: “Those who have adopted Iman are most ardent in the love of Allah.”

Similarly, along with: “When they stand for Salaat, they stand half-heartedly”, is to be found: “They show people (i.e. they perform Salaat with riya)’.

The Quran, like it reprimands and condemns the defaulter of Salat and Zakat, also states the evil of pride and vanity (takabbur and ujub).

The same applies to the Ahadith. Like the chapters of Salaat, Saum, Ba’y (trade and commerce), Nikah (marriage), Talaq (divorce) are to be found, so too do the chapters of riya, takabbur, etc., exist the books of hadith. No muslim can refute the fact that like the a’maale zaahirah are Divine Commands so too are the a’maale baatinah. “Establish Salaat and pay Zakat” are positive commands just as “Adopt sabr and shukr” are positive commands. Like the ayat: “Fasting has been decreed upon you” establishes the Shar’i nature of fasting, the ayat: “Those who have Iman are the most ardent in the love of Allah” establishes the Shar’i nature of love for Allah. On closer examination and reflection it will be realized that all the a’maale zaahirah are designed for the reformation of the a’maale baatinah. The purification of the baatin (the heart and soul of man) is the aim and the basis of najat (salvation in the Akhirat) while the despoiling of the baatin is the cause of destruction.

Allah Ta’aala declares:

“Verily he who has purified the nafs has attained success, and he who has despoiled it has suffered

great failure.”

“That Day (of Qiyamat) neither wealth nor sons will benefit (anyone); but that person who comes to Allah with a reformed heart.”

The first ayat asserts success as being the consequences of the purification of the baatin while the second ayat negates the benefit of wealth and sons in the absence of a reformed and sound heart. Iman and Aqaaid on which pivots the acceptance of all a’maal (actions), are conditions of the heart (i.e. the baatin). It is clear that a’maal are designed for the perfection of Iman. It is, therefore, clear that the original purpose (of Deen) is the reformation (islaah) of the heart by virtue of which man is ushered in the Divine Court of Acceptance and attains lofty spiritual ranks. This is what is technically known as Tasawwuf.

STATEMENTS OF THE SŪFIYAA

In this regard **Baayazid Bustaami** *rahmatullahi alaihi* says:

“Do not be deceived if you see a performer of supernatural feats flying in the air. Assess him on the standard of the Shariah – how he adheres to the limits of the Commands of the Shariah.”

Hazrat Junaid Baghdaadi *rahmatullahi alaihi* says:

“All doors besides the strict following of Rasoolullah ﷺ are closed to mankind.”

Hazrat Nuri *rahmatullahi alaihi* says:

“Do not venture near to one who lays claim to a condition which brings about transgression of the limits of the Shariah.”

Hazrat Khwajah Naseeruddin Chiragh Dehlawi *rahmatullahi alaihi* says:

“Obedience to Rasoolullah ﷺ is imperative. Such obedience is essential in word, act and intention because Love for Allah Ta’aala is not possible without obedience to Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa ﷺ.”

(Continued on page 12)

Female Attendance of Eid Salaah

OVERVIEW OF THE MATHAA-HIB

The Hanafi View

It is stated in the Fiqh Encyclopaedia of Kuwait that according to the Hanafi math-hab, young girls and attractive women are prohibited from attending the Eid salah. As for old women, they are allowed to attend Eid on condition that they dress inconspicuously, avoid the use of perfume, and do not mingle with men to and from the Eidgah. This viewpoint of the Hanafi School is enunciated in every one of the renowned works of Fiqh, such as Fathul-Qadeer, Raddul-Muhtaar, Al-Bahrur-Raa'iq, Al-Badaa'i, Al-Hindiyyah, etc. There is, therefore, no difference on this score according to Hanafis.

The Shaafi View

In the book of Imam Nawawi, Al-Majmoo', he states: "Imam Shaafi' and Scholars of his math-hab state that it is mustahabb (meritorious) for **non-attractive females** to attend the Eid salah. As for attractive females and women of exquisite beauty, it is forbidden for them to attend. This is the categorical statement of the math-hab and the definite ruling of the majority of (Shaafi') Scholars. Imam Raafi'e mentioned another view, which states that it is not mustahabb even for non attractive women to attend Eid salah. But this view has not been preferred by Ulema. When these (non-attractive) women do attend, they should don clothes

that are simple and non-appealing. They should also avoid perfume. This is the ruling for elderly ladies who are past the age of desire. As for the young females and attractive (middle-aged) women, it is forbidden for them to attend the Eid salah due to the possibility of fitnah (zinaa) in their emergence.

If someone argues that this is contrary to the hadith of Ummu Atiyyah (radhiyallah anha) (in which Rasoolullah ﷺ allowed females to attend Eid salah), we will respond by quoting the statement of Hazrat Ayesha ؓ that appears in Saheeh Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim: 'Had the Messenger of Allah ﷺ witnessed the things women have introduced (after him), he would have prevented them (from the Masaajid) like the women of Bani Israel were banned.' Furthermore, the fitnah in today's times are far greater compared to the time of Rasoolullah ﷺ. Imam Shaafi (RA) states in Al-Umm: It is far more desirable to me that elderly ladies attend (only) Eid Salah instead of the other faradh salah."

(Al-Majmoo' of Nawawi)

It is stated in Al-Mausoo'atul Fiqhiyya (Encyclopaedia of Fiqh, Kuwait): "The **Maliki, Hambali, and Shaafi'** scholars have taken the view of prohibition for young and attractive

females attending the Eidayn, due to the fitnah that lurks in such emergence. When old women emerge they should do so in simple, un-appealing dress."

In *Tuhfatul-Muhtaj* the following appears: "It is sunnat for elderly women who are past the stage of desire to attend Eid salah and jamaat salah, in shabby, simply clothing, without any perfume. They should cleanse themselves with plain water before emerging. If they apply perfume or dress up in their finery and ornaments, then for these old women, too, it will be forbidden to attend, like it is forbidden for the young girls and women of fine looks and stature. Instead, these women should offer their salah at home."

A SUMMARY OF THE ABOVE

The ruling of all four Schools of Fiqh emerges quite clearly from the above: In today's times there lurks great fitnah in the emergence of young and attractive women for Eid salah, hence all mathaa-hib prohibit their attendance for Eid and even for the five daily salah. For old women and ladies who are beyond the stage of being attracted to men or being the cause of attraction for men, the condition for their emergence is that they dress in plain, simple, and old garments, and avoid the use of jewellery and perfume. If they don't comply with this condition then it is not permissible for even these elderly ladies to attend Eid, Jumu'ah, and the five daily jamaat salah. ❀ And Allah knows best.

Statements of former Soofiyya

(Continued from page 11)

Hazrat Khwajah Mueenuddin

Chishti rahmatullahi alaihi says:

"He who adheres to the Shariah, executing its commands and refrains from transgression, progresses in spiritual rank, i.e. all progress is dependant on adherence to the Shariah."

Hazrat Hakimul Ummat rahmatullahi alaihi says:

"Whoever acquires the wealth of *wusool* (Attainment, having attained the love of Allah) has acquired it by virtue of following the Sunnat." ❀